



# COMMON SENSE in the HOME

## EDITED by MARION HARLAND



### DANGERS OF KEEPING HOUSE PETS IN THE CITY.

"THE house cat must go! Her principal function in most homes is that of a germ bearer, and the house dog is a good second in this line. City apartments are not qualified for housing domestic pets, unless they are goldfish or canary birds."

Such was the recent utterance of a prominent physician before a conference of hygiene experts.

Perhaps it is because of the strong prejudice I hold personally against pets in a city environment that his words impressed me particularly. I know all that can be said of the pleasure a child finds in a dog or a cat. I am familiar with the arguments in favor of the comfort adults are reported to experience in the companionship of four legged friends.

The fact that personally I do not know these joys, that any satisfaction I might have in association with such animals is offset by my appreciation of the unnatural conditions to which they are subjected in the town house or flat is not my only objection to their presence in the home and especially in the nursery. I believe they are menaces to the health of the children of the family, to say nothing of the older members of the household and the doctor's dictum that such pets are germ bearers only serves to confirm my conviction.

I repeated the statement I have quoted to a trained nurse of long experience. "Do you believe he is right?" I asked her. "I know he is!" she said with conviction. "House dogs are not so bad, but cats are real dangers. They convey diphtheria, for one thing, not by germs in their fur but in their throats, and even when they are well. It makes me shiver when I see babies cuddling cats, inhaling their breath, holding them up close to them. Many a case of disease that seems mysterious has been conveyed into the family by a pet cat."

#### Cats in the Nursery.

This danger had never before been put to me in such a concrete form. I had founded my objections to cats on other grounds. Without accepting the old nurses' theory that cats suck the breath of sleeping children I yet feared to admit them to my nursery while there were babies in it. Possibly the tales I had feared had affected me, but my own experience had something to do with it. For we had a cat which was the delight of the baby and was given the run of his bedroom during his waking hours. But one night when I went to look at the child before I retired and found the cat lying asleep on the little fellow's chest, all the old superstitions surged up within me. I caught the baby into my arms to see if he were still alive or if he had had the breath crushed out of him by the heavy weight upon his breast. He was all right, to be sure, but after that the cat was not admitted to his domain.

This alone might not have sufficed to fix my prejudice against cats in the house with a child, but the knowledge of their treachery established my opposition to them. I spare you the gruesome tales I have heard of their behavior in the house of illness and death. They are not needed, for I have known cases less disagreeable to repeat or

to hear which prove my point. I have seen them turn against the hand that has fed them, I have known them to fly savagely at the mistress who had always fondled them, I have been in touch with instances where their bite has proved almost as dangerous as that of a dog with rabies.

Not long ago I was dining in the apartment of friends who, having no children, had concentrated their affections upon a pet cat. He was humored as no child should be, allowed to sleep in the same bed with his protectors, and to have only such food as suited his rather expensive tastes. His mistress, or, as she called herself, his "muvver"—a good deal to my disgust—entertained us with a recital of her pet's characteristics.

#### Not the Dogs' Fault.

"He's the most jealous little fellow you ever saw," she said complacently. "If I speak to him he taps me with his paw. The other day when he did it I didn't pay any attention to him, just to see what he would do, and I found out. Look there," displaying a long scratch on her arm. "And the other day a caller sat in the chair he thinks is his and he jumped at her and tore a great hole in her skirt. Isn't he the clever thing?"

"I should think you would find it inconvenient at times," I said, a little at a loss as to what was expected of me.

"O, that's not the beginning of his tricks," she went on. "We have to buy lamb chops and steak for him, and he must have his chicken bone regularly. We are afraid to give him too much meat, since he is a house cat and can't get much exercise, but if we get fish it has to be the best, and he wants his milk half cream."

I tried to show a polite interest and to conceal my real feelings, but within me was boiling the thought of the starving children who could be helped by the money and time and care bestowed upon the jealous cat.

This reflection is constantly with me when in the course of my walks abroad I encounter women and sometimes men leading pet dogs out to exercise. To me there are few spectacles more ignominious than that of a staid lord of creation with a diminutive dog on a leash.

"Disgusting!" I ejaculated one day after I had passed a man with a couple of pugs in tow. "If I were in his place I would like to drown the little brutes!"

"After all, it's not the dogs' fault," protested my companion.

Not their fault, I grant—rather their misfortune. Was there ever a well conducted dog which would not prefer freedom and country life to pampered existence as a house pet? There is room for doubt if even the essentially domestic dogs which are raised for boudoir and drawing room ornaments would not be happier roaming about kennels as they please than coddled up as they are, just as furbelowed children would prefer mud pies and bare footed bites to all the luxuries that could be offered them.

No, it is not the fault of the dogs but of the women who pervert their maternal

impulses and devote themselves to puppies instead of babies.

#### "Babies Is Lots Nicer."

Always when I see a small dog caressed and carried by a woman I am reminded of the car conductor who stood and watched

But I am wandering from the topic with which I started—the undesirability of dogs and cats as house companions for children. It is hard on the animals, harder on the children. They may have some enjoyment in the association with the pets, but the disadvantages connected with this are too many to assume.

By all means, give your children the chance to learn kindness to dumb creatures by permitting them to have dogs, rabbits, chickens, and even cats if there is plenty of outdoors for the youngsters and for their pets, but don't bring any of these into a city flat. Instead, choose something which will not suffer from the con-

farther. Goldfish are not the only creatures which are content in a glass globe. At any aquarium may be found a variety of fish from which selection can be made, and until you study the matter you have no idea of how attractive a fish globe may be. Even if the occupants are decidedly less responsive than a cat or a dog, they are not wholly

and their habits as though they possessed a good deal more intelligence than is commonly imputed to them.

Another friend considered a small turtle who shared the hospitality of her glass globe one of the most valued members of her family! Still another had a little lizard or chameleon which lived in her bedroom curtains, and which she credited with much understanding. In fact, I have known several friends who kept lizards or salamanders as pets and found them clean and agreeable if not remarkable for mental development!

But canaries are easily first when it comes to household companions who do not suffer from confinement and give no trouble beyond the care taken in looking after them. Born and raised in cages, with a long pedigree behind them of ancestors with the same history, they know nothing of the free outdoors, and would perish if they were given liberty to rove as they please. They have an intelligence beyond that of the fish or the lizard, they learn to know and love their owners, they may be taught a number of accomplishments, and have various pretty little tricks of their own which make them interesting even to the casual observer and much more so to those who love them and study them.

If your child or any member of your household yearns for a domestic pet, buy a canary! You can go even further and get a pair, and then go into the absorbing work of raising young birds. There is a great deal of enjoyment and much education in this pursuit, and an admirable opportunity for teaching a child a sense of responsibility which will prove of value later in life.

#### Lesson for Child.

The possession of a pet of any sort is a waste of energy unless utilized as a means of leading a child to recognize that certain duties devolve upon him for which he, and he alone, is answerable. If your child is old enough to take care of the bird make it his peculiar care. Let him feel that the bird depends upon his master for food, for water, for cleanliness, and accustom him to bestowing all these upon it with the same regularity which marks his own meals and bath.

If he doesn't care enough for the bird to take the trouble to give it its food and its bath and to clean its cage he is not fit to have a pet and would neglect any he might own. He should not be permitted to shift the charge of it to some one else, but he made to recognize that every gift or privilege brings a duty with it.

This is a lesson more easily taught when a bird is in question than when one is concerned with a dog or a cat, which can keep up its living for itself. Give your child the bird or the goldfish now and persuade him of the cruelty of confining a dog or a cat to the imprisonment of four walls and the limited range of the roof of the city streets.

If we begin to implant this faith in the children there is a chance that a future generation may develop enough common sense to keep most pets where they belong—in the country or in some surroundings where they need not live a wholly artificial and unwholesome life.



House dogs are not so bad—but cats are real dangerous.

a woman passenger descend from his car with a dog tenderly clasped in her embrace. He surveyed her as she made her way to the sidewalk with her pet in her arms, then jerked the starting bell with an exclamation of disgust.

"Gosh!" he said. "Rabbits is lots nicer."

In which sentiment you and I undoubtedly concur with him.

One of the penalties we pay for the city life is abstinence from such natural delights as are afforded by the company of live stock and instead of seeking to get this by introducing a dog or a cat into unnatural conditions we should strive to adapt ourselves to circumstances and get happiness for our children and for ourselves in some other way.

finement and will not injure the children by its presence.

#### Best Pets for Children.

The medical authority to which I have referred mentions goldfish and canaries as fit inmates of an apartment or a town house. I would extend the limits even

uninteresting except to those who have never studied them.

One old lady of my acquaintance who was alone a good deal found much solace and companionship in her goldfish. She habitually spoke of them as her "little birds," and took as much enjoyment in feeding them, in changing the water in which they lived, in following their motions

## MARION HARLAND'S HELPING HAND.

"HAVE you several occasions eaten a most delicious pie known as 'Butter Scotch Pie.' It had a meringue on top."

"Will you, if possible, kindly print the recipe?"

Never having heard of the delectable pie until I read your letter, I cannot produce it out of hand. I can guarantee that you will see the recipe in this corner soon after your request reaches the eyes of our constituency. No notable formula for culinary purposes escapes them in the long run.

It occurs to me that what was known at the south as "transparent pudding" in the ante-bellum days, and is still called at the north "lemon pie," may pass under the title of "butter Scotch" in Kansas. It was compounded of butter and eggs, and often had meringue upon the surface. While waiting for another, and maybe a more correct recipe, suppose you try this? If it prove to be the wrong thing, you will have been amused during the term of suspense:

**TRANSPARENT PUDDING**—Half a pound of butter, one pound of sugar, six eggs—whites and yolks beaten separately, juice of one lemon, grated rind of two lemons, a grated nutmeg, half a glass of brandy.

Cream butter and sugar light, beat in the yolks, spice, and brandy, and, last of all, fold in the stiffened whites. Bake in open crust of the best puff paste.

The above recipe is a hundred years old and is as delicious (and as rich) now as when it was inscribed upon the salooned leaves of my grandmother's recipe book. A note below adds:

"If you would make this into a more elegant dish, you may beat the whites of four eggs into the mixture and whip the whites of four more into a standing froth with four table-spoonsful of fine white sugar and a little lemon juice to spread over the top of the pies. The recipe should make two large pies. They are very nice baked in patty pans, when they are called by some 'cheese cakes.' Some fanciful persons insist that they were the very 'cheese cakes' spoken of in the Arabian Nights, and that 'pepper' in the tale meant nutmeg."

Wasn't that a pretty conceit? The digression is more interesting than the recipe. I may venture to observe that I have made nice pudding—or pie—by this recipe, using four eggs instead of six.

#### Request for Washing Machine.

"Will you ask if some one has a washing machine to spare me? You got one for me a year ago, and it has been such a help and godsend, but has suddenly collapsed, and I can hardly do washing without it. A kind neighbor gave me a cook stove that

is large and has a huge oven, but I cannot bake a decent loaf of bread in it. My bread is lovely and light when it goes in, but spoiled when I take it out. If I could get another stove I would return this to its owner. But the thing I really need most of all is the washing machine."

"Mrs. J. F. P."

It would be a beautiful thing if we could supply this correspondent's needs, both as to the stove and the washing machine. We who are cooks know the trial it is to prepare good food and have it ruined in the baking. Mrs. J. F. P. is one of the well established Cornerites, and I think of her as of the band of brave mothers who struggle to bring up their children in the right way with insufficient means. Any help that can be offered to her will be directed where it will be of real service and receive due appreciation. I have her address to send to any one who can furnish what she wants. This is another one of the Illinois contingent, so the assistance should come from that part of the world, or the cost of transporting the articles she needs will be too heavy.

#### Request for Cotton Pieces.

One of your correspondents speaks of cotton patches she has to give away. I would be very glad if I could get them either from her or from any other reader who has them to spare. Mrs. E. G."

#### Burnt Sugar Cake.

"I am coming to join the Corner, from which I get so much enjoyment and help. Some one asked for burnt sugar cake, and although I have watched for it I have failed to see an answer, so I will send mine. It may not be the original one, but it fills the bill."

Three eggs, one cup sugar, one cup lard, one cup milk or water, two teaspoons baking powder, one teaspoon vanilla, flour enough to make batter of medium stiffness. I sometimes put in one cup nuts. Take one cup sugar and put in pan or skillet and burn until dark brown, stirring all the time; pour in a half cup boiling water and cook until sugar is dissolved; half of this must be added to milk in mixing cake and the other half reserved to use in the icing.

"Mrs. R. B. M. asks for a soap recipe. She will find one or two on the outside of any can of lye. She can use cracklings, although I find salty lard will make good

soap. Just melt it and strain and weigh; then follow directions on can. Don't stir too hard or the lye and grease will part."

We are glad to welcome you into our constituency with your helpful budget and hope that you may return early and often. If I am not mistaken, a recipe for soap making has appeared or will shortly be

printed for the benefit of the seeker for home made soap. But I am glad to put housekeepers on the track of another method as well. To my mind the use of lard seems an expensive process, and my own inclination would be to collect my grease for soap from the left over or undesirable fats which gather in the kitchen. The fat from mutton or lamb, for instance,

or such others as cannot be utilized in frying, are far cheaper than lard, unless you live on a farm and kill your own pork.

#### Cornbread Turkey Stuffing.

"I am sending you a good cornbread turkey stuffing, since I see an application has been made for it. I have used the one

### FAMILY MEALS FOR A WEEK.

#### SUNDAY.

##### BREAKFAST.

Grape fruit.

Oatmeal.

Jelly and cream.

Deviled kidneys.

Popovers.

Toast.

Tea and coffee.

##### LUNCHEON.

Cold boiled ham.

Baked beans.

Lettuce and celery salad.

Thin brown bread and butter.

Lemon jelly.

Cookies.

Tea.

##### DINNER.

Celery soup (made of outside stalks of celery from salad).

Roast beef.

Hominy pudding.

Lima beans.

Apple tart.

Coffee.

#### MONDAY.

##### BREAKFAST.

Oranges.

Mush and milk.

Bacon.

Boiled eggs.

Toast.

Tea and coffee.

##### LUNCHEON.

Barbecued ham (a leftover).

Baked potatoes.

Mush muffins (leftover mush).

Crackers.

Cheese.

Tea.

##### DINNER.

Brown potato soup.

Larded beef (a leftover).

Large hominy.

Stewed salsify.

Steamed pudding with raisins.

Coffee.

#### TUESDAY.

##### BREAKFAST.

Baked apples.

Shredded wheat and cream.

##### Fried pork with cream gravy.

Quick biscuit.

Tea and coffee.

##### LUNCHEON.

Mince of beef and ham (leftovers).

Gratin potatoes.

Graham gems.

Cookies.

Cream cheese.

Tea.

##### DINNER.

Cream of salsify soup (a leftover).

Curried veal and rice.

Chilled bananas.

Spinach.

Chocolate blancmange.

Tea.

#### WEDNESDAY.

##### BREAKFAST.

Oranges.

Hominy and cream.

Salt mackerel.

Stewed potatoes.

Toast.

Tea and coffee.

##### LUNCHEON.

Sausages and griddle cakes.

New maple syrup.

Tea.

##### DINNER.

Cream of tomato soup.

Baked calf's liver.

Beta.

Mashed potatoes.

Cottage pudding.

Coffee.

#### THURSDAY.

##### BREAKFAST.

Grape fruit.

Oatmeal and cream.

Bacon.

Fried eggs.

Whole wheat biscuit.

Tea and coffee.

##### LUNCHEON.

Sliced liver warmed in gravy (a leftover).

Fried hominy (a leftover).

Toasted biscuit left over from breakfast.

Hot gingerbread.

Chocolate.

##### DINNER.

Vegetable soup.

Roast leg of lamb with mint sauce.

Pars.

Browned potatoes.

Butter Scotch pie.

Coffee.

#### FRIDAY.

##### BREAKFAST.

Oranges.

Cornflakes and cream.

Fried smelts.

Hot rolls.

Toast.

Tea and coffee.

##### LUNCHEON.

Scalloped oysters.

Saratoga potatoes.

Quick Salsy Lunch drop cakes.

Jam.

Tea.

##### DINNER.

Macaroni soup.

Baked bluefish.

Parisian potatoes with butter sauce.

String beans.

Bread and raisin pudding.

Coffee.

#### SATURDAY.

##### BREAKFAST.

Stewed prunes.

Oatmeal and cream.

Fried apples and bacon.

Toast.

Tea and coffee.

##### LUNCHEON.

Sliced cold lamb (a leftover).

Salad of beets and potatoes (a leftover).

Baked cheese toast.